

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT L 00559 101137Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 INR-10 /049 W
-----059160 101144Z /14-R

R 100835Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7489
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

UNCLAS PORT LOUIS 0559

NAIROBI FOR REDSO/FFPO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAID, MP
SUBJECO: PL 480 - TITLE I FOOD FOR MAURITIUS

REF: (A) PORT LOUIS 419 (NOTAL); (B) STATE 11834 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING RECEIPT REF (B) WE HAVE HAD FURTHER DISCUSSIONS
WITH GOM REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF INITIATION OF A PL 480
TITLE I PROGRAM. WE INDICATED THAT PROGRAM POSSIBLE, THOUGH
UNLIKELY, IN FY 78, WITH STRONGER POSSIBILITY OF INITIATING PROGRAM
IN FY 79. WE SUGGESTED THAT IF GOM INTERESTED, A FORMAL REQUEST
WOULD BE APPROPRIATE AT THIS TIME. WE SPOKE IN TERMS OF A
LEVEL OF DOLS ONE MILLION PER ANNUM, THOUGH WE RECEIVED
INDICATION THAT GOM MIGHT WISH TO ASK FOR AS MUCH AS DOLS
THREE MILLION PER ANNUM.

2. WE HAVE NOW RECEIVED FORMAL REQUEST FROM GOM IN FORM OF

LETTER DATED MAY 8, 1978 TO AMBASSADOR FROM PRIME MINISTER
RAMGOOLAM, AS FOLLOWS.

BEGIN TEXT: YOUR EXCELLENCY, THE GOVERNMENT OF MAURITIUS WOULD
WISH TO AVAIL ITSELF OF THD FACILITIES PROVIDED UNDER THE TERMS OF
THE UNITED STATES AGRICULTURAL TRADE DEVELOPMENT AND ASSISTANCE
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ACT OF 1954 (PL480-TITLE I) AND HEREBY APPLIES FOR A CONSESSIONAL
LOAN TO PURCHASE UP TO 32,500 TONS RICE FROM THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA.

THE GOVERNMENT OF MAURITIUS IMPORTS ANUALLY ABOUT 75,000 TONS OF
RICE WHICH REPRESENTS ABOUT 90 PERCENT OF THE RICE REQUIREMENTS
OF THE COUNTRY. OUR TRADITIONAL SUPPLIERS OF RICE ARE BURMA

AND THAILAND BUT LATELY WE HAVE ALSO BEEN PURCHASING RICE FROM THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. OUR TRADITIONAL SUPPLIERS HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE SO FAR TO SUPPLY ANY RICE TO US THIS YEAR AND FOR THIS REASON WE HAVE NEGOTIATED FOR THE FIRST TIME THE PURCHASE OF 18,500 TONS OF RICE FROM NEPAL. WE HAVE ALSO NEGOTIATED THE PURCHASE OF 24,000 TONS OF RICE FROM THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. WE ARE THEREFORE STILL SHORT OF SOME 32,500 TONS OF RICE TO MEET OUR ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS AND THIS QUANTITY NEEDS TO BE PURCHASED BY SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER NEXT AT LATEST IN ORDER TO AVOID ANY SHORTAGE OF OUR STAPLE COMMODITY.

THE GOVERNMENT OF MAURITIUS PROPOSES TO UTILIZE THE PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF RICE FOR FINANCING OUR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

I SHALL BE GRATEFUL IF YOUR GOVERNMENT WOULD GIVE FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION TO OUR REQUEST. WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO SUPPLY THE RELEVANT DATA FOR DETERMINING THE EXTENT OF THE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

WITH ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION. VERY
SINCERELY YOURS, S. RAMGOOLAM, PRIME MINISTER. END TEXT

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THIS REQUEST FAR EXCEEDS WHAT USG IS
LIKELY TO BE ABLE TO PROGRAM FOR MAURITIUS, AS WELL AS EXCEEDING
WHAT GOM COULD USE WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME FOR FINANCING
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AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, WE PROPOSE TO
PROCEED WITH PREPARATION OF NECESSARY DATA AND ANALYSIS TO SUPPORT
AN EMBASSY RECOMMENDATION FOR A PROGRAM OF MORE MODEST SIZE,
WITH EMPAHSIS ON STRONG DEVELOPMENT RATIONALE. TO ASSIST US WE
HAVE REQUESTED VISIT LATER THIS MONTH BY AID REGIONAL FOOD FOR
PEACE OFFICER FROM NAIROBI.
KEELEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOODS, PL 480 TITLE 1
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PORTL00559
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780198-0328
Format: TEL
From: PORT LOUIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780574/aaaacknh.tel
Line Count: 102
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 954830a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 PORT LOUIS 419, 78 STATE 11834
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2735671
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ECO: PL 480 - TITLE I FOOD FOR MAURITIUS
TAGS: EAID, MP, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/954830a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014